

To quote the words of the Coast Guard hymn,

Eternal Father, Lord of hosts,
Watch o'er the men who guard our coasts.
Protect them from the raging seas
And give them light and life and peace.
Grant them from Thy great throne above
The shield and shelter of Thy love.

On behalf of the people of Alabama and a grateful nation, I offer condolences to Lt. Cmdr. Taylor's, wife, Teresa, and their sons, Evan and Emmett, as well as other family and many friends. You are each in our thoughts and prayers.

TRIBUTE TO OAK KNOLL VILLA AND THE RETIREMENT HOUSING FOUNDATION

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2012

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Oak Knoll Villa Apartments in my district in San Antonio. Oak Knoll Villa is a member of the Retirement Housing Foundation, and they will join in celebrating the foundation's 50 years of service to the community on March 13, 2012.

The Retirement Housing Foundation is a non-profit organization of 159 communities in 24 states, Washington, DC, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, providing housing and services to more than 17,000 older adults, low income families, and persons with disabilities.

Throughout the past 50 years the foundation has fostered an environment in which team members work to make life better for thousands of San Antonians. This pinnacle achievement speaks to both the past laurels and future service of Oak Knoll Villa. Oak Knoll Villa strives to provide all persons with quality, affordable housing so that San Antonio families do not have to sacrifice paying the rent for other basic necessities.

The noble mission of the Retirement Housing Foundation is as important today as it was 50 years ago. Its impact on our communities cannot be understated. I would again ask you to congratulate Oak Knoll Villa and the Retirement Housing Foundation on their 50 years of fostering and ensuring that low-income families and individuals.

HONORING REGIS HIGH SCHOOL REACH PROGRAM'S 10 YEAR AN- NIVERSARY

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2012

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 10 year anniversary of the Recruiting Excellence in Academics for Catholic High Schools, or the REACH program, an innovative program devised and operated by Regis High School in my district for low income middle school students to prepare them for acceptance into the elite private, Catholic and public high schools in New York City.

Regis High School was founded in 1914 as a 100 percent scholarship school and con-

tinues this fine tradition today. In that spirit Regis began the REACH program ten years ago to help low income middle school students to excel in their studies to allow them to not only attend the best high schools, but eventually the best colleges and universities in the country. Students from the REACH program have gone on to attend MIT, Boston College, Cornell, Williams and the University of Scranton.

The REACH program is a study in what can be achieved if students are given the proper tools to excel. Students attend a six week summer program, Saturday sessions in both the spring and fall and engage in an independent research program in the winter. During each of these phases students are not only tutored to excel academically but are also provided with leadership training, a student mentor from Regis and eventually placement services into the best high schools in New York City.

Ninety-six percent of students who participate in the REACH program have gone on to a four year institution of higher learning, many of whom are the first in their family to attend college. The REACH program can be used as an example for all of us that by giving students the appropriate tools they will excel.

I want to congratulate Regis on their wonderful success and wish them even greater success in the next ten years.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2012

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$15,499,023,629,682.44. We've added \$4,872,146,580,769.36 to our debt in 3 years. This is debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

PROTECTING ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN HIGHER EDUCATION ACT, H.R. 2117

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2012

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the amendment to H.R. 2117 proposed by the gentleman from Colorado. This amendment would require the Secretary of Education to present this body with a plan to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of Federal financial aid dollars.

I was regrettably detained and unavailable to vote on the following amendment to H.R. 2117.

Rep. Polis (CO) Amendment #5: Would require the Secretary to present a plan to prevent waste, fraud and abuse to ensure effective use of taxpayer dollars. Had I been present to vote I would have voted "yes" on Amendment #5.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION SMALL CONDUIT HYDROPOWER DEVELOP- MENT ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2842) to authorize all Bureau of Reclamation conduit facilities for hydropower development under Federal reclamation law, and for other purposes:

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, I strongly support the installation of small scale hydropower in water canals, pipelines and other Bureau of Reclamation facilities. A small investment could go a long way in helping farmers and rural communities produce homegrown energy to help power their farms and irrigation systems and even sell power to the grid. The Three Sisters Irrigation District in Oregon is pursuing such a project, which could eventually create over 3 kilowatts of clean renewable power for the local community.

These innovative projects should move along as quickly as possible. Because they would be installed in existing facilities, extensive environmental review is not needed. However, I cannot support this bill because it includes an unnecessary waiver of the National Environmental Policy Act. Environmental review for these projects can be expedited through the existing process, which allows categorical exemptions by the appropriate federal agency. A blanket exemption to NEPA would set a bad precedent, and history has shown that short-circuiting environmental and public reviews typically delays rather than assists project development.

I supported an amendment by Rep. NAPOLITANO that would have struck language in the bill that waives NEPA. Because this amendment did not pass, I must reluctantly vote no. However, I stand ready to work with my colleagues to promote development of small conduit hydropower without undermining environmental safeguards.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CONGRESSMAN DONALD PAYNE

SPEECH OF

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2012

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember Congressman DONALD PAYNE.

Today, we lost a dear colleague and friend in the House of Representatives, and the American people lost a dedicated leader. I am honored to have served with Congressman PAYNE, and am deeply saddened by his passing.

DONALD spent his life fighting for those less fortunate, and was a committed advocate for education, civil rights, and social justice—both at home and abroad. He was a humanitarian in the truest sense of the word, and his passion was both inspiring and contagious. As the first, and only, African-American from New Jersey elected to Congress, DONALD was a